

"I may not agree with a word you say but I will defend unto death your right to say it." — Voltaire

Tundra Times



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Editorial—

Constructive Criticism

Gov. William A. Egan and his new administration is making highly favorable statements regarding the native people of the state. This, of course, is being received by the natives with approval and with no little sense of gratitude. At last, the state is attempting to do meaningful things for its native citizens. The neglect that was rampant in the past has been breached.

We can also say that Gov. Egan has stuck his neck out by approaching the Alaska native situation to the extent he has. If he has not received criticism for wanting to do things for the native people, he may soon. If this comes about, it would be most unfortunate and the state's new approach toward its native citizens could be stymied.

Constructive criticism is agreed upon by a good portion of the citizenry but oblique criticism to gain something while seemingly zeroing in on something else smacks of greed.

We think the new Egan administration should be given a chance to achieve the aims the head of state has proposed.

LETTERS FROM HERE AND THERE

Federal Field Committee for Development Planning in Alaska
Suite 400, 632 Sixth Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
January 4, 1971

Honorable Rogers Morton
Secretary-Designee
U.S. Department of the Interior
C Street between 18th & 19th
Streets, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I would urge that you give every consideration to the request for increasing the number of Realty Officers to expedite the processing of allotment claims.

Very best regards,

Sincerely,
George Sharrock
Chairman

Huslia, Alaska
January 2, 1971

The Honorable
Governor William A. Egan
Lt. Governor Henry Boucher
Sir:

I thank you for the honor and privilege you have extended to me and my fellow Alaskan Indians and Eskimos to attend your inauguration of January 9, 1971, being held at Juneau, Alaska. Although at this time, for most of us, getting to Juneau to attend your many inaugural activities is beyond our means.

It is our hope that some of the Indians and Eskimos from the bush will be able to attend the inauguration and represent the Indian and Eskimo as he truly lives in his own bush country.

Your invitation to so many Indians and Eskimos from out of the bush, has been very touching and has made us feel for the first time that we are not completely forgotten once the election was over.

Your respect and concern has been shown for the Indian and Eskimo of the bush. For this we feel deeply honored. And thank you once again.

Yours truly,
Jim Huntington
(Speaking for all Indians and Eskimos who can't read and write.)

Late Mail Dulls Christmas —

Newtok Village Children Ask TT's Help To Improve Village Mail Service

When a small village is scheduled to receive mail only once per week, bad weather may prevent the delivery till the next week. This means a long time without mail.

When this happens the two weeks before Christmas, as it did in Newtok this last year, it can mean a very dismal Christmas for the children of the village.

"Please can you help us? We need better air service," wrote an eighth grade student from Newtok to the Tundra Times. "We didn't get any mail for 16 days. Our weather has been good, but the airplane never comes here to Newtok."

Several children from the small village in southwest Alaska wrote to the Tundra Times to try to get better mail service for their village.

They described a disappointing Christmas. Presents didn't arrive, high school students coming from boarding homes and schools couldn't get home and several parents were caught out of town for the holiday.

"And my father did not come for Christmas," wrote Nick Tom, Jr., a sixth grade student, "and my mother was sad."

Though the children could not know, Wien Consolidated Airlines did try to send out a special plane on December 24, after the regular December 19th plane was cancelled due to bad weather.

Wien schedules a plane to Newtok from Bethel each Saturday. During the week before Christmas, both attempts to reach Newtok were called off by bad weather.

The last mail delivery to Newtok before Christmas was December 12. On that day, 1380 pounds of mail went to the village on the regular Wien plane and another 101 pounds on a Cessna 180.

December 28, the day the children of Newtok wrote letters to the Tundra Times for help, the mail plane finally got to their village. It brought many of their letters to Fairbanks in two days.

According to a list of mail deliveries in the past few months, Wien gets its plane to Newtok about every week—not always on a Saturday schedule.

Meanwhile, the children of the village want to do something to improve the infrequent deliveries.

"We have been waiting for 16 days but the plane hasn't come and some of the high school students didn't come for Christmas," wrote 7th grade student David Kassauli.

"We are writing for our parents," explains eighth grader Margaret Lincoln.

The children are trying to obtain an airline radio or agent for their village, some means to improve communication.

"Why don't we have better mail service and an airline radio? Can you help us get an airline radio? We are very sad that the plane did not come. Please help us," writes seventh grade student Billy Tom.

Most of the children of Newtok asked the Tundra Times to answer their letters asking for help. Shall we explain to them that their village is too tiny to support an air route—that even one plane per week is subsidized by the government?

Shall we explain that people

at Wien Airlines try to fulfill their contract for weekly mail delivery, but may not be able to due to bad weather one day, and push the flight back another

week?

Probably, the children will understand. However, no one can give them back their Christmas.

Indian Editors Form Press Association

"There was a boy at Fort Lewis College, a young Indian boy. He was obviously impressed by the Indian Press Association. He saw me sitting in a big office in Denver sending hordes of reporters out to report on the 'Indian view,'" said Charles Trimble, director of the newly formed Indian Press Association.

The association formally organized in November at a meeting in San Francisco.

"Be sure and explain the Indian view" he told me," said Trimble. "A bright kid. Intense and radical."

"Actually what is the Indian View. I don't think I know what it is," Trimble admits. Silently, or almost bitterly, he laughs inwardly at the comparison between the young college student's fantasy and the weak reality of the newly emerging press association.

Trimble figures he is exactly three eighths Indian, through his mother and Indian grandparents from two separate tribes. He is officially Sioux. His wife is white, throwing him up against the ever present accusation that any help from her is accepting white superiority.

Trimble was formerly editor of the Denver based Indian Times and just finished a semester teaching Indian culture at Fort Lewis college in Durango, Colo.

The Indian Press Association is more of a plan than a reality, despite its newly elected officers and paid director with an office in Denver.

What is the Indian press? It ranges from polished Tundra Times type offset newspapers of eight to ten pages or more to mimeographed sheets distributed in an Indian social center.

Mainly, it is a group of tiny one-man newspapers struggling almost without funds, fed by the dedication of a corps of editors who usually work single-handed.

Most of the papers are tied to tribal councils for funds and direction, with editorial independence often a myth. News gathering is hampered by lack of funds, staff and connections with the world beyond the reservation.

Typical of the Indian editors is IPA president Jim Jefferson, an engineer who forsook his trade to edit the small Southern Ute Drum, voice of that tribe in Ignacio, Colorado.

Jefferson is dedicated to the "Indian voice" point of view—that there is no rationale for an Indian Press except to express an indefinable Indian outlook.

Yet, college educated and able to leave the reservation whenever he wishes, Jefferson is sure he himself isn't the reflection of his people, though he tries to be.

Gwen Owle, the competent and talented wife of a member of the Cherokee tribal council took over the languishing Cherokee One Feather three years ago when no one in the tribe wanted it. She did.

Married to a Cherokee, mother of three children, she is still an outsider to many of her husband's people.

She puts out her four page offset weekly alone, between three hour each way weekly trips she must make to take her youngest boy, who is deaf, back and forth each weekend from the special boarding school he attends.

Her family includes her husband's aged father, an invalid tied to the reservation by strong bonds.

Indian editors are young and old. They include young people in their 20's with college and journalism school degrees, older people who learned in the hard school of trial and error.

Lorraine Edmo, a recent J-school graduate recently started the Sho-Ban News, monthly voice of her Shoshone Bannock tribe in Idaho.

Carrie Nightwalker, editor of the Yakima National Review is 23. She is a tiny brown-skinned, big-eyed girl with a firm grasp of the realities of Yakima reservation politics, and a sharp cynicism concerning the BIA.

Tribal CAP (the lower 48 version of RurAL CAP) funds her paper and its staff of 5.

Elders of the Indian press include Marie Potts, a sharp eyed ancient Maidu grandmother from Sacramento who sports a muskrat belly parka she won at last year's NCAI convention in Anchorage. She brought the fur

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Alaska Children's Council Formed

The Council for Alaska's Children has been formed with Mr. Bob Halcro elected Chairman, Mr. Ed Hanson as Vice-Chairman, Mr. George Hall as Secretary-Treasurer.

Also on the Board of Directors is Mr. Carl Brady, Jr. and Mr. R.W. Burnett.

This Council has been formed to draw together the many needs and provide extra funds for homes throughout the State of Alaska that are in dire need of extra funding to provide the services they desire to give.

The Council will provide extra funding to these qualified homes by presenting special events throughout the state the year around.

The Walk for Hope which the Council is actively working on at the present is one such project. The Walk for Hope will take place May 1, 1971.

Another project firmed up is the Harlem Clowns making basketball appearances in some 18 cities throughout the state in early spring.

Homes throughout the State of Alaska are being informed by letter of the creation of the Council. Applications for assistance should be sent to the Council for Alaska's Children, P.O. Box 551, Anchorage, Alaska, 99501.